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the Boyz are back in town

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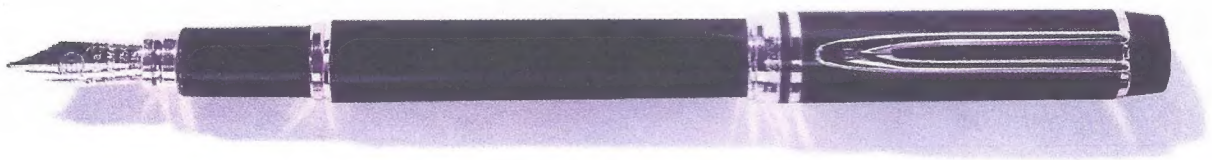

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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Australian soccer is on the verge of a new era and I am honoured to be at the helm at such an historic occasion. We have had progress over the years but it has not come fast enough. There now exists a new widespread enthusiasm which will transcend the traditional barriers that have held the game back in this country and I, with the assistance of my Board, expect to harness this enthusiasm to move the sport forward in leaps and bounds.

There is much that is good with Australian soccer and only very little that is not good. Unfortunately, the little that is not good has been seized by the media and exaggerated to such an extent that it has become the common mis-conception. We are going to change all of this with your help. It is vital that the Australian public get behind Australian soccer and give it their full support. It is the world's most popular sport and we need to make it the most popular Australian sport if we are ever to be able to compete with the rest of the world and expect to do as well as we have in other, minor, sports. Soccer is already played by more Australians than any other team sport, so why should it not become the most watched sport as well?

We are fortunate today to be witnessing two of the best soccer teams that have ever graced the sporting fields of Australia. The Australian team, the **Coca-Cola** Socceroos, are one of the strongest that we have ever had the pleasure of seeing, having been strengthened by Australian players who are currently full time professionals playing in some of the best leagues in Europe. As spectators, we are in for a great time.

The Australian Soccer Federation is greatly supported by a number of sponsors without whom we could not bring you spectacles such as you are about to witness. We would therefore like to express our gratitude particularly to The **Coca-Cola** Company, the Australian Sports Commission, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, Ansett Australia, Optus Communications, SBS Television, adidas, Cathay Pacific and United Distillers. For this particular series of matches, we are pleased to be taking the **Coca-Cola** Socceroos to Perth for the first time in 20 years and we hope that the public take advantage of this opportunity with many more to come in the future. For the match in Perth, we would like to welcome Minproc Engineers as the match sponsor ably supported by Healthways.

Finally, I would like to express the Board's appreciation of all the **Coca-Cola** Socceroos' supporters that have come out in force for all the National Team matches over the past years, once again showing that Australian soccer will continue to grow from strength to strength.

David Hill
Chairman, Australian Soccer Federation

CONTENTS

Chairman's Message 3
The Boys are Back in Town 4
Farewell Frankie 6
Time to Awaken the Mongrel Dog 8
Australian Officials 13
Socceroos Player Profiles 14
Team Line-ups and Match Officials 16
Ghana Player Profiles 18
"Black Stars": Ghana 19
"Black Stars" Factfile 25
Match Regulations 27
Kalac: He Wants to be King of the 'Keepers 28
National Anthem and Credits 30

Coca-Cola SOCCEROOS v GHANA

THE BOYS ARE BACK IN TOWN

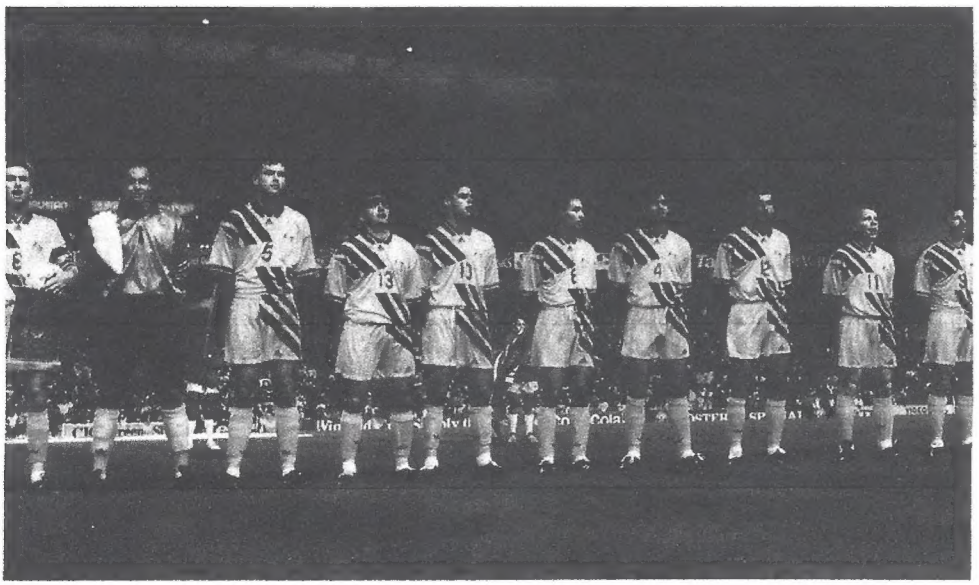
by Bruce Campbell

It is fair to say that the Australian sporting public had its expectations raised a fair bit during the last World Cup campaign. After all why couldn't Australia have qualified against the problem-ridden Argentinian side. Sure, they had won two World Cups in the past, but this was the present and the Aussie side was packed full of our own stars.

In the lead-up to the game the press was divided between home-town loyalty and doubts that Australia would get a hiding. But for most of the football public this was a game to be relished, a game when we would have the chance to show that we had truly arrived on that world stage provided by the biggest sporting tournament on the globe. Any doubts that the fans had were quickly dispelled in the first thirty minutes of the opening final qualifier against Argentina. The **Coca-Cola** Socceroos were superb. They defended well, they attacked well and they created enough chances to win the game — and that Aurelio Vidmar goal, well that was enough to light up the record crowd which packed every nook and cranny of the Sydney Football Stadium.

In the end Australia had to settle for a draw and then went out in Buenos Aires to a fluke deflection off Alex Tobin. That's football, but it really can be cruel. The Aussie fans were facing up to the prospect of their team being broken up, with press stories suggesting that at least half of the team would retire. Would we ever see their like again, a team which was Australia's greatest since Rasic's Raiders of 1974?

However, it seems that no-one really bothered to ask the players themselves about playing again, whether THEY wanted to be part of Australia's next bid to reach the World Cup finals in France, in 1998. So "The Boys are Back In Town" really is a suitable anthem, then, for the reuniting of that great team, a side which went within one goal of beating Argentina and still refuses to give up. Add in a couple of new faces like Glasgow Rangers starlet Craig Moore, pitch in a farewell to Flying Frankie Farina and the scene is set for the best reunion in years. This is a TEAM. Now, after years of having a good defence or a great 'keeper or one good winger, all of a sudden coach Eddie Thomson has another problem on his hands — who to leave out.



"That's right," says the pragmatic Scotsman. "It seems that we are now in a situation of having too many good players. I won't complain about that one either. But it is great for our fans to get another chance to see this team, because this team isn't going to break up at all, it is going to take the **Coca-Cola** Socceroos all the way to France."

Thomson isn't a mug either, and over the last few years he has consistently turned down overseas jobs so that he could stay at the helm of the team

that he has built. That team has gone through change as well, with maybe a few new faces still to show up on the international scene en route to the World Cup.

"There is still time for new players to force their way into my plans," he says. "Four years ago Craig Moore was just a raw kid, now he is playing with one of the biggest clubs in Europe and mixing it with stars like Basile Boli, Ally McCoist, Brian Laudrup and Mark Hateley. Who knows the future of our current youngsters? I am sure that there are young players out there who have a dream of playing for Australia in France.

"Some of our players are getting older but that is a bonus also because they are all playing at the top of their profession and the experience that they are bringing into our squad just can't be bought. You don't make a good player in training camps — experience does that for you."

An exciting aspect of this Australian team is its ability to attack with our teams of the past all too well noted for their ability to shut the opposition out with tough-guy defences. It seems that those days are changed and instead Thomson is looking for that "total footballer", the player who can attack, defend and link as well. That is a bit of a surprise from a coach who earned a reputation as something of a hard man player himself in the Scottish League. But maybe it is the knowledge he learned from the other side of the boot that is now helping him to turn our football fortunes around.

"Players have to be more than just defenders or attackers these days," he says. "They have to be mobile and contribute in different areas. That is why players like Robbie Slater and Aurelio Vidmar are such huge talents. That is why this is a good team."

That is also why The Boys Are Back in Town, with the friendly games against Ghana being the start of our next campaign, a three-year plan designed to take Aussie football to the very pinnacle, an appearance in the next World Finals to be played in France in 1998.

Farewell Frankie...

by John Taylor of the Telegraph-Mirror

Frank Farina is the typical rags to riches story. Some 13 years ago he arrived at the Australian Institute of Sport from Cairns wearing shorts, a t-shirt and a pair of thongs.

Today, Farina would be one of the wealthiest of the Australian soccer players who made good overseas and no-one could begrudge him his financial rewards. But the man he owes a huge debt of gratitude to is **Coca-Cola** Socceroo coach Eddie Thomson.

Ever since he can remember when he was growing up in Cairns, Frankie had a love of sports cars. "When Thommo signed me for Sydney City all I wanted was my signing-on fee so I could buy myself a flashy car," Farina recalls.

Thomson told Farina not to waste his money on a car and invest in a unit. After an argument, Farina heeded the advice of Thomson and invested in a unit with David Mitchell.

"It's the best piece of advice I ever received. Thommo would always put you on the right track — not just about football matters," Farina says.

Only for the foresight of Thomson, the Australian sporting public would not have had the chance to say farewell to one of the **Coca-Cola** Socceroos' greatest servants. Frankie officially announced his retirement from the national team after the gallant 'Roos lost the World Cup qualifying battle to Argentina at the River Plate Stadium in November, 1993.

Thomson thought it fitting Farina go out the proper way and hence one final appearance for Australia against Ghana at the Sydney Football Stadium.

Farina's days as a club player, though, are not over. It is, however, a better than even bet he will bring down the curtain on his European career, which has seen him play first division in Belgium, England, Italy and France.

It was after the 1988 Seoul Olympics that Farina went abroad and joined Club Brugge. He had the distinction of being the top goal scorer in Belgium and thus attracted huge interest from Italian clubs.

While his move to Italy turned sour, it should be noted that much bigger name players than Farina failed to achieve in Italy. Liverpool striker Ian Rush is one.

After a loan spell in England with Notts County, Farina's next move was to France where he signed with Strasbourg and, this year, helped Lille escape relegation. He scored twice against Lens in the final round. One of his goals was a 50 metre solo effort. "I felt like I was 17 again," he said.

Among his 65 appearances for Australia there are two games that stand out. "I'll never forget the Olympic qualifier against New Zealand in Wellington (1987) and the World Cup qualifier against Canada in Sydney," he said.

It was Farina's equalising goal against New Zealand that got Australia to the Seoul Olympics. New Zealand were

ahead 1-0 with 13 minutes to go and coach Frank Arok was convinced by his then assistant Eddie Thomson to get Farina on the field. A cocky New Zealand coach, Kevin Fallon, said to the Australian striker as he took the field: "Give me a kiss, Frankie."

Within minutes Farina broke away and scored the equaliser. He could hardly hide his emotions and raced to the New Zealand bench where he blew Fallon a kiss.

The ***Coca-Cola*** Socceroos had their agonising moments in the return World Cup qualifier against Canada in Sydney but Farina gave the home crowd something to cheer about with his goal from an overhead kick.

When the match was forced into a penalty shoot-out, it was fitting that Farina slotted away the deciding penalty.

"One of the reasons that I enjoyed myself against Canada was that I played the role that I like the most — as an out and out striker," he said. "I'd have to say that 90 per cent of the games I played for the national team under Frank Arok were as a right midfielder."

Thomson has no doubts that the best game he saw Farina play for Australia was the one against Canada in Sydney.

"I've always said that Farina has the heart of a lion and he never knows the meaning of the word 'beaten'," said Thomson.

"He's been the most exciting striker Australian soccer has had for a long time because of his genuine pace."

Farina was 24 when he made the move abroad while the problem that exists in Australia today is that most players hit the overseas trail when they are 17 or 18.

"Quite frankly, it doesn't matter how good a player is in Australia, European clubs don't rate Australian players," says Farina.

"It's a case of proving yourself over and over again in Europe. I remember when Paul Okon joined Club Brugge. He was ignored for the first two years. This year he's been one of the outstanding liberos in Belgium — if not the best."

Farina has been a terrific ambassador for the game and, despite his achievements, he has always remained humble.

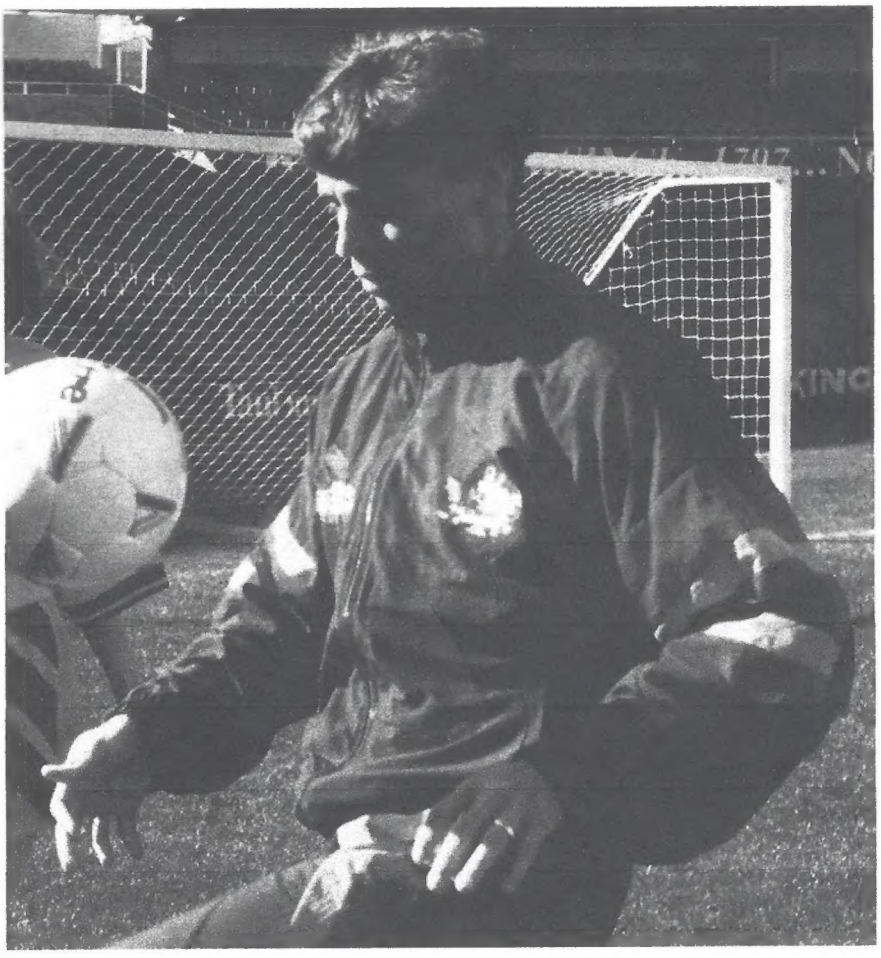
"There's a lot of risks we take as professional footballers. You've got to take the good with the bad but I can honestly say that I have enjoyed a lot of good times," Farina said.

Farina's 66th appearance for Australia against Ghana will be his last for his country but don't be surprised if he's playing in the National Soccer League again next season. His former club Marconi and Brisbane have both spoken to him.

Then again, two Belgian clubs have shown interest in luring him away from France but Frank has hinted strongly about a homecoming.

"My wife Julie is pregnant again and our son Jordan is ready to start school."

Whatever you decide Frank, thanks for the memories.



Thanks for the memories...

TIME TO AWAKEN THE MONGREL DOG

by Ray Gatt of The Australian

Is the sleeping giant that is Australian soccer ready to spring to life after decades of almost total neglect?

Will the greatest game in the world finally find a niche in an Australian sporting culture that has disdainfully looked on it as the mongrel dog among the so-called pedigree football codes?

Well, if the events of recent months are any indication then the answer has to be an emphatic and overwhelming "yes".

It seems that Australian soccer fans — and the media — finally have real cause to think that the sport is about to break the shackles and head into an exciting and positive era.

A new chairman in David Hill, a new chief executive in David Woolley, new faces on the ASF Board, three forthcoming managerial appointments, a management restructure and a well-chartered, logical five-year plan for the future have opened the eyes of all.

Gone, forever we hope, are the days of Australian soccer flying by the seat of its pants. Gone is the indecision and kow-towing to the harmful political arms of the game. Gone are the days of treating Joe and Jill Public like Mr and Mrs Nobody.

This is no fly-by-night scheme. It is not an aberration. It is not your western style Medicine Man selling you false hope with all kinds of crazy concoctions and lotions designed to fix all — something close followers of the game have been forced to put up with for so many years.

This is tangible stuff. With each passing day the evidence of a new dawn is emerging. Important decisions are being made and everyone in the game has been put on notice.

Now you might say you have heard it all before and ask why should things be different this time.

Simple. Two words . . . David Hill.

A veritable one-man tornado, Hill has stepped into a job few people in sport would dare touch in their right mind.

He has come into the game at a time when it is, arguably, at its lowest ebb in a history already littered with disasters and stories of grave mismanagement and incompetence.

But, as he did with ABC-TV and the North Sydney rugby league club, Hill has set about altering the divisive attitudes, changed the defeatist culture and started to put our game on a new plane.

And what you will see won't be some sort of trumped-up, tart-looking model which will fall apart at the first sign of a breeze.

. . . a major shake-up of . . . the National League . . .

No. Hopefully, this model will stand tall and proud and will be able to withstand even the hardest of beatings from those people who want to tear Australian soccer down because they will know the threat it poses.

Barely two months into the job and Hill has somehow managed to bring soccer people together and convince them to work for the betterment of the sport rather than from political or self-gain.

Already, with the help of ABC-TV personality, George Negus, he has overseered the successful three-day Soccer Summit in Melbourne. A think-tank involving some of the biggest names in the corporate world and the grass roots of the code.

And, only last week, he announced, among other initiatives, a major shake-up of Australian soccer's problem child — the National League.

The seven initiatives are:

(1) The NSL to be extended to three rounds as of next season.

(2) New teams will be introduced and some existing teams cut.

(3) Management instructed to prepare an options paper on the remodelling and restructuring of the NSL.

(4) A scheme of direct scholarship or apprenticeship payments to talented players contracted to NSL clubs in an effort to stop some of the drain of our wonderful talent overseas.

(5) An indoor tournament involving all NSL clubs to start the season.

(6) A State-of-Origin series, tournament style, at the end of the NSL season.

(7) A bigger and better program of games for the **Coca-Cola** Socceroos with the national team to play at least 12 games in front of their home crowd.

And, it won't stop there.

With the help of his capable board and, given plenty of room to kick the ball, Hill has set Australian soccer off on its first, shaky, step on the path to some long overdue respect and standing, not only in Australian sport, but in the community in general.

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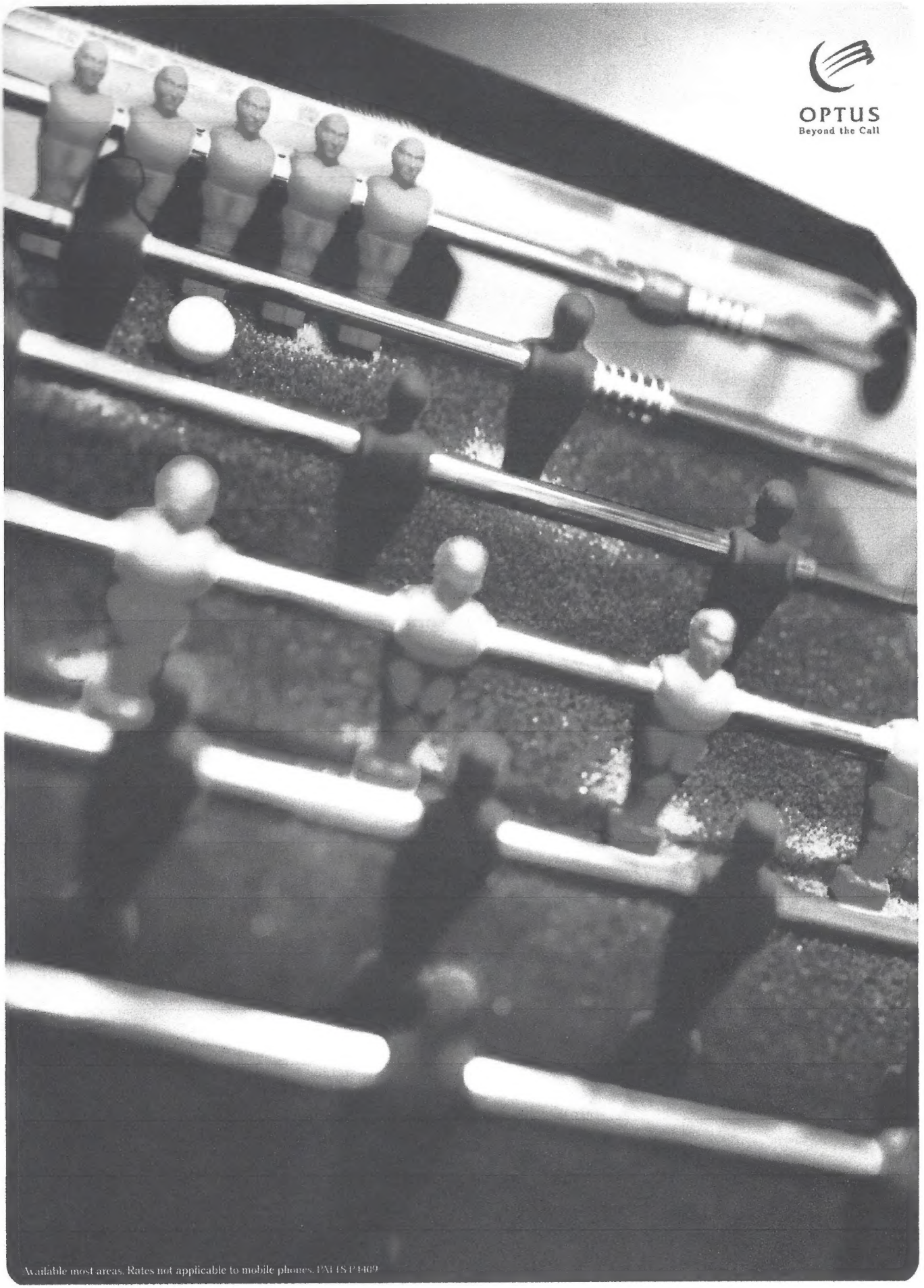

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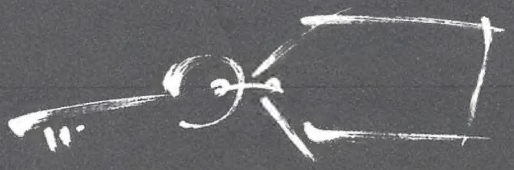

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The Australian Sports Commission is about people. Its aim is to enrich the lives of *all* Australians through sport.

The Commission supports and encourages everyone, from the very young to the very old, recreational athletes to gold medal winners.

The objectives of the Australian Sports Commission are to lead in the development of sport in Australia, to increase participation and improve performance, skills and opportunities in sport by raising the standard of coaching at all levels.

By providing resources, services and facilities the Commission enables athletes to achieve excellence in sport while furthering their education, vocation and other aspects of their personal development.

More than 6.5 million Australians are registered members of sporting organisations; many more participate informally. The Commission wants each and every one of them to 'Have a Go'.

Australian Sports Commission

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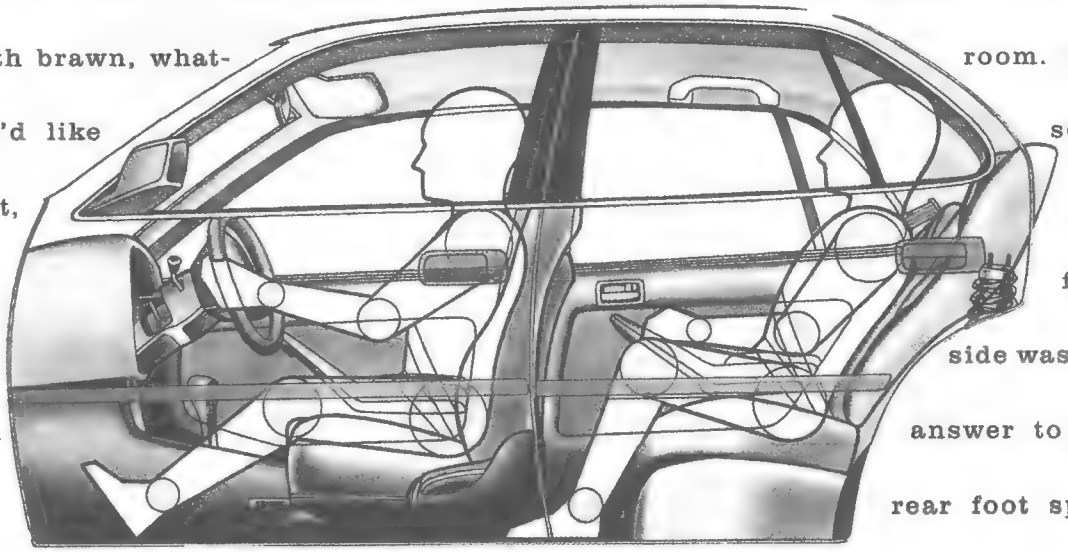

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AUSTRALIAN TEAM STAFF

EDDIE THOMSON
(National Coach)

Date of Birth: 25.2.47

Playing Career:
Heart of Midlothian, Scotland (8 years)
Aberdeen, Scotland (4 years)
San Antonio Thunder, NASL (1 year)
Sydney City (NSL, 3 years)

Playing Honours:
Scotland Under 23s
Scottish League

Coaching Career:
Sydney City (7 years)
Sydney Olympic (3 years)
Australian Staff Coach
Assistant Australian National Coach (5 years)
National Director of Coaching (1 year)
National Coach (since 1990)

LES SCHEINFLUG
(Assistant National Coach)

Date of Birth: 1.10.38

Playing Career:
Sydney Prague (9 years)
Marconi-Fairfield — player/coach (2 years)

Playing Honours:
Australia (1964-68, 11 appearances)
Australian captain
Scored Australia's first ever World Cup goal v North Korea in 1965

Coaching Career:
Marconi-Fairfield (1970/71)
Canterbury (1971)
South Coast United (1972)
Sydney United (1973)
Assistant National Coach (1974 including World Cup Finals) (1979-81)
National Coach (1981-84)
National Youth Coach (1981-83, 86 — present)
Assistant National Coach (since 1990)

RAUL BLANCO
(Assistant National Coach)

Date of Birth: 4.12.41

Playing Career:
Arsenal de Sarandi, Argentina 1962-66
Sydney Prague (1967-72)
Sydney Olympic (1972-73)

Coaching Career:
Parramatta Eagles (1977-79)
St George (1980-81)
Marconi-Fairfield (1982)
Parramatta Eagles (1983-84)
Dock Sud, Argentina (1988-91)
Parramatta Eagles (1991-92)
West Adelaide (since 1992)

PEDRO RUZ
(Physiotherapist)

DR. SIRI KANNANGARA
(Team Doctor)

NELSON DELASIO
(Gear Steward)

PLAYER PROFILES

GRAHAM ARNOLD

Position: Midfielder/ Striker
Club: NAC Breda (Netherlands)
Full Internationals: 44
Height: 184 cm
Weight: 87 kg
Date of Birth: 3.8.63

Has been a member of the Aussie set-up since 1985 when he was with Sydney United. Since then he has played in Belgium and Holland and was one of the main players in Australia's bid to reach the 1994 World Cup finals.

JASON VAN BLERK

Position: Midfielder
Club: Millwall (England)
Full Internationals: 20
Height: 186 cm
Weight: 76 kg
Date of Birth: 16.3.68

After playing in Holland with Go Ahead Eagles, Jason made the switch to English football last season with Millwall. An AIS graduate who has successfully made the transition from the Olympic team to the full national side. His father Cliff was also an Australian international.

MARK BOSNICH

Position: Goalkeeper
Club: Aston Villa (England)
Full Internationals: 3
Height: 183 cm
Weight: 85 kg
Date of Birth: 13.1.72

Arrived on the big stage with outstanding displays in the 1991 World Youth Cup. Since then he has played NSL for Sydney United as well as a spell with Manchester United in England. Forced his way back into the Aston Villa side after the team experienced a form slump which cost manager Ron Atkinson his job. At his best absolutely brilliant and bordering on true world class.

STEVE CORICA

Position: Midfielder
Club: Marconi-Fairfield
Full Internationals: 7
Height: 177 cm
Weight: 74 kg
Date of Birth: 24.3.73

Diminutive player who has enormous ball playing skills. Another AIS graduate and the first Australian to have ever appeared at every international level — Schoolboys, Under 17, Under 20, Olympic and **Coca-Cola** Socceroos. One of the driving forces in his club side, Marconi-Fairfield.

FRANK FARINA

Position: Striker/ Midfielder
Club: Lille (France)
Full Internationals: 36
Height: 178 cm
Weight: 78 kg
Date of Birth: 5.9.64

Former AIS student who played NSL with Canberra Arrows and Marconi before moving to Europe. One of the best Australian born players of all time and a real crowd pleaser who can lift a game with his jinking runs. Set to make his farewell to the international scene in this series.

STEVE HORVAT

Position: Sweeper
Club: Melbourne Knights
Full Internationals: 3
Height: 180 cm
Weight: 80 kg
Date of Birth: 14.3.71

The keystone of the current Australian champion club, Melbourne Knights. Competing for a place against Ned Zelic and Milan Ivanovic yet he is very highly rated by the coaching staff. Winner of the Marston Medal for Best NSL Grand Final Player in 1995.

MILAN IVANOVIC

Position: Sweeper
Club: Adelaide City
Full Internationals: 31
Height: 187 cm
Weight: 80 kg
Date of Birth: 21.12.60

A former Red Star Belgrade player who made his debut for the **Coca-Cola** Socceroos in 1991 and has been a virtual ever-present since. A former winner of the Marston Medal for best NSL Grand Final player and NSL Player of the Year trophy he is still regarded as the mainstay of the Aussie defence.

ZELJKO KALAC

Position: Goalkeeper
Club: Sydney United
Full Internationals: 9
Height: 202 cm
Weight: 91 kg
Date of Birth: 16.12.72

Twice winner of the NSL Goalkeeper of the Year award and a transfer target for clubs from England and Greece. Made his full international debut in the Kirin Cup against France coming on for the injured Robbie Zabica — and saved a penalty against Jean Pierre Papin. Has acquired a name for himself as the "King of the Penalties". A great character.

STAN LAZARIDIS

Position: Defender
Club: West Adelaide
Full Internationals: 10
Height: 180 cm
Weight: 75 kg
Date of Birth: 15.8.72

The West Aussie is a player of Australia's future and his attacking raids down the flank are part of Eddie Thomson's total football concept. Made his full debut in 1993 against Kuwait and has since been a regular member of the national set-up.

JOHN MARKOVSKI

Position: Striker/ midfield
Club: Morwell Falcons
Full Internationals: 8
Height: 186 cm
Weight: 95 kg
Date of Birth: 15.4.70

One of the NSL's most gifted players he got his name on the **Coca-Cola** Socceroos score-sheet with a brilliant headed goal against Japan. Also a member of Australia's Barcelona '92 Olympic team. Brilliant ball skills for such a big man and a firm favourite on the terraces.

CRAIG MOORE

Position: Defender
Club: Glasgow Rangers (Scotland)
Full Internationals: 0
Height: 185 cm
Weight: 82 kg
Date of Birth: 12.12.75

The "baby" of the current **Coca-Cola** Socceroos squad but one of immense talent. Has grown in stature since breaking into the Rangers first team and is regarded as one of the players of the future for Australia. AIS graduate who has played for Australia at Under 17 and Under 20 level.

PAUL OKON

Position: Midfielder
Club: Club Brugge (Belgium)
Full Internationals: 3
Height: 185 cm
Weight: 85 kg
Date of Birth: 5.4.72

A former Marconi player who has really stamped his style on the Belgian League this last season. A key member of the 1991 World Youth Cup side in Portugal, his appearances in the full side have been limited by injury.

JASON POLAK

Position: Midfielder
Club: South Melbourne
Full Internationals: 15
Height: 179 cm
Weight: 78 kg
Date of Birth: 9.1.68

One of the classiest players in the NSL and has flitted in and out of the Australian set-up since his debut in 1988 against Fiji. Very experienced player who has also played overseas in Holland (de Graafschap), Belgium (Kortrijk) and Greece (Panathinaikos).

TONY POPOVIC

Position: Defender
Club: Sydney United
Full Internationals: 3
Height: 193 cm
Weight: 96 kg
Date of Birth: 4.7.73

A relative newcomer to the full national side. Performed well against Japan and Colombia earlier this year and looks set for a long career with Australia. Currently the youngest club captain in the NSL with Sydney United and a player who is noted for his steadiness.

ALEX TOBIN

Position: Midfielder
Club: Adelaide City
Full Internationals: 46
Height: 190 cm
Weight: 80 kg
Date of Birth: 5.4.66

Another of the Adelaide City contingent which is an integral part of the Australian set-up. A reliable player who rarely puts a foot wrong and has been an automatic choice for selection whenever available for the last four years.

CARL VEART

Position: Striker
Club: Sheffield United (England)
Full Internationals: 11
Height: 184 cm
Weight: 78 kg
Date of Birth: 21.5.70

Signed for his English club in 1993 after an explosive start to his Australian international career which saw him score in each of his first four games. Can also play equally well from midfield. Also an Olympian at Barcelona and a former Adelaide City player.

AURELIO VIDMAR

Position: Midfield
Club: Standard Liege (Belgium)
Full Internationals: 17
Height: 180 cm
Weight: 72 kg
Date of Birth: 3.2.67

One of the most exciting ball players that Australia has ever produced. His long flowing locks make him particularly distinctive. Scored Australia's sole goal against Argentina in the 1994 World Cup qualifiers.

TONY VIDMAR

Position: Defender
Club: Adelaide City
Full Internationals: 23
Height: 187 cm
Weight: 78 kg
Date of Birth: 4.7.70

Member of the 1992 Barcelona Olympic side and also the 1994 World Cup squad. Had a short stint in Belgium but returned to Adelaide City in 1993 where he has been in outstanding form as an attacking fullback.

PAUL WADE

Position: Midfielder
Club: Heidelberg
Full Internationals: 71
Height: 181 cm
Weight: 72 kg
Date of Birth: 20.3.63

The most capped soccer player in Australian history having made his debut against China in 1986. One of the hardest working players on the field and a great ambassador for the game.

NED ZELIC

Position: Sweeper
Club: Borussia Dortmund (Germany)
Full Internationals: 16
Height: 185 cm
Weight: 81 kg
Date of Birth: 4.7.71

One of the exciting players promoted to the full international team by coach Eddie Thomson. Former captain of the Australian Olympic team in Barcelona '92. Has fought back from an injury plagued season but a silky ball player who has that attacking flair characteristic of all great sweepers.

AUSTRALIA

Coca-Cola SOCCEROOS

No.	NAME	CLUB
1	MARK BOSNICH	Aston Villa FC
2	TONY VIDMAR	Adelaide City
3	TONY POPOVIC	Sydney United
4	MILAN IVANOVIC	Adelaide City
5	ALEX TOBIN	Adelaide City
6	PAUL WADE	Heidelberg United
8	PAUL OKON	Club Brugge
9	GRAHAM ARNOLD	NAC Breda
10	FRANK FARINA	Lille FC
11	STEVE CORICA	Marconi Fairfield
12	AURELIO VIDMAR	Standard Liege FC
13	JASON VAN BLERK	Milwall FC
14	NED ZELIC	Borussia Dortmund FC
15	CARL VEART	Sheffield United FC
16	JASON POLAK	South Melbourne
17	STEVE HORVAT	Melbourne Knights
18	CRAIG MOORE	Glasgow Rangers
19	JOHN MARKOVSKI	Morwell Falcons
20	STAN LAZARIDIS	West Adelaide
22	ZELJKO KALAC	Sydney United

National Coach: EDDIE THOMSON
Assistant National Coach: LES SCHEINFLUG
Assistant Coach: RAUL BLANCO

TEAM COLOURS

First Choice: Wattle yellow with green trim shirt, yellow shorts, yellow socks.

Alternate Strip: Navy blue with greet stripe shirt, blue shorts with green trim, green socks.

MATCH

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Referee: S
Linesman 1
Linesman 2:
4th Offici
Inspector:

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Referee: G
Linesman 1:
Linesman
4th Official:
Inspector:

3r
WACA Ground, P
Kick-of

Referee:
Linesman 1
Linesman
4th Official
Inspector:

Details as supplied are co

v GHANA

GHANA "BLACK STARS"

NAME	CLUB
JOE ADDO	VFB Stuttgart
SIMON ADDO	Ghapoha
KWAME AYEW	Lecce
STEPHEN BAIDOO	Goldfields
NANA BENYIN CRENSTIL	Goldfields
EBENEZER HAGAN	Goldfields
ASARE ISAAC	Anderlecht
SAM JOHNSON	Hearts of Oak
NII LAMPTEY	Aston Villa
TANKO IBRAHIM	Borussia Dortmund
YAW PREKO	Anderlecht
NII ODARTEY ARYEE	Neuchatel
MALLAM YAHAYA	Borussia Dortmund
JACOB NETE	Hearts of Oak
MOHAMMED GARGO	Bayern Munich
ABLADI KUMAH	Al Shabab
BEN KLUVI	Bendel Insurance
AFO DODOO	Goldfields
KASULA DA COSTA	Goldfields
AUGUSTINE ARHINFUL	Kries SC
RANSFORD BANINI	Melbourne SC

Head Coach: ISMAEL KURTZ
Assistant Coach: JOHN ESHUN
Assistant Coach: MALIK JABIR

TEAM COLOURS

First Choice: Yellow shirt, shorts and socks.

Alternate Strip: White shirt, shorts and socks.

FICIALS

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30 p.m.

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— June 24, 1995
30 p.m.

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dy Hassell

at time of going to press.

GHANA "BLACK STARS"

PLAYER PROFILES

JOE ADDO
Position: Midfielder
Club: VFB Stuttgart (Germany)
Full Internationals: 6
Date of Birth: 12.9.71

Another of the many Ghana team members who combines youth and experience. Played for Ghana's premier club before taking up a scholarship at the George Maison University in America in 1990. Now playing in the Bundesliga with Stuttgart.

SIMON ADDO
Position: Goalkeeper
Club: Ghapoha
Full Internationals: 8
Date of Birth: 11.12.74

A member of the 1992 Ghana Olympic team. Very young but has a lot of experience.

KWAME AYEW
Position: Striker
Club: Lecce (Italy)
Full Internationals: 15

A product of the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona where he was the tournament's highest scorer. Strong with great speed.

STEPHEN BAIDOO
Position: Defender
Club: Goldfields
Full Internationals: 2
Date of Birth: 25.9.76

A member of the Ghana team which was runners-up in the 1993 World Youth Cup in Australia. Currently a member of the Ghana Olympic team but has yet to make a starting debut for the full national team.

NANA BENYIN CRENSTIL
Position: Goalkeeper
Club: Goldfields
Full Internationals: 9
Date of Birth: 23.8.68

A very tall and agile goalkeeper. Made his debut for Ghana in 1986/87 and has recently been recalled to the side after a long absence. Currently the number one choice for Ghana and has been one of the mainstays in the Goldfields side which has won two successive Ghana Premier League Championships.

EBENEZER HAGAN
Position: Midfielder
Club: Goldfields
Full Internationals: 6
Date of Birth: 1.10.75

Captain of the Ghana Olympic team and rated as the best player in the country. Is noted as a dribbler and scorer.

ASARE ISAAC
Position: Defender
Club: Anderlecht (Belgium)
Full Internationals: 9
Date of Birth: 1.9.74

A product of the victorious 1991 Under 17 World Champion side and drafted into the national team in 1992. Since then he has been a regular inclusion and although he is short in height he has an abundance of skill and experience.

SAM JOHNSON
Position: Defender
Club: Hearts of Oak
Full Internationals: 8
Date of Birth: 25.7.73

Called up into the national team prior to the 1994 African Nations Cup tournament in Tunisia and has been a regular feature since. Club captain for Hearts and is a utility player with stamina and great strength.

NII LAMPTEY
Position: Midfielder
Club: Aston Villa (England)
Full Internationals: 15
Date of Birth: 10.12.74

Young but very experienced. A member of Ghana's 1991 World Under 17 Cup winning side. Says he is going to be the next Pele and loves to take on defenders.

TANKO IBRAHIM
Position: Striker
Club: Borussia Dortmund (Germany)
Full Internationals: 0
Date of Birth: 25.7.77

Graduated straight form Ghana Second Division side Kumasi to the Bundesliga where he has become a regular feature.

YAW PREKO
Position: Striker
Club: Anderlecht (Belgium)
Full Internationals: 8
Date of Birth: 8.9.74

Another member of the 1991 Under 17 World Youth Cup side. A player with great speed and who was called up to the senior national team in 1992.

NII ODARTEY ARYEE
Position: Striker
Club: Neuchatel (Switzerland)
Full Internationals: 0
Date of Birth: 5.10.71

Swiss-based Austrian-born Ghanaian who is also waiting to make his full debut. A recent discovery who has a whole range of tricks in his repertoire.

MALLAM YAHAYA
Position: Midfielder
Club: Borussia Dortmund (Germany)
Full Internationals: 1
Date of Birth: 31.12.74

A product of the 1986 World Youth Championships in Scotland. Signed for Bundesliga side Borussia Dortmund in 1992.

JACOB NETE
Club: Hearts of Oak

MOHAMMED GARGO
Club: Bayern Munich
Date of Birth: 9.6.75

ABLADI KUMAH
Club: Al Shabab (Saudi Arabia)

BEN KLUVI
Position: Goalkeeper
Club: Bendel Insurance (Nigeria)
Date of Birth: 20.2.69

AFO DODOO
Position: Defender
Club: Goldfields

KASULA DA COSTA
Position: Fullback
Club: Goldfields
Date of Birth: 15.3.70

AUGUSTINE ARHINFUL
Position: Midfielder
Club: Kries SC
Date of Birth: 30.11.74

RANSFORD BANINI
Position: Midfielder
Club: Melbourne SC
Date of Birth: 10.10.73

GHANA OFFICIALS

Mr E K Adu
(Leader of Delegation)

Ismael Kurtz
(Head Coach)

John Eshun
(Assistant Coach)

Malik Jabir
(Assistant Coach)

Dr G K Fordjour
(Team Doctor)

Mr Amartey Armah
(Physiotherapist)

G B Awdakye
(Deputy General Secretary)

BLACK STARS: *a combination of problems and talent*

by Bruce Campbell

Ghana is one of the emerging countries in world football set to make its mark in the near future as the old guard of the world game begins to dissipate in the face of the revolution of the '90s. Just a flick through their current national squad gives an impressive indication of the depth of talent they have, talent which is dazzling football fans all over Europe as well as on the African continent.

Already they have qualified for next year's African Nations Cup which gives the "Black Stars" a big boost on their own bid for World Cup '98 qualification. They failed to make USA '94, surprisingly not even making the second round African eliminators after being humbled by lowly Burundi before going down by the odd goal in three in their last game with eventual group winners Algeria.

Ghana had also been disappointing in the finals of the previous African Nations Cup when a much-publicised bust-up between stars Tony Yeboah and Abedi Pele supposedly shattered team morale. The team, which consisted largely of home based players, bowed out 2-1 in the quarter finals to Ivory Coast — one of the big shocks of the tournament. Ivory Coast were then considered a bit unlucky to go out on a penalty shoot-out in the semis, that cruellest of deciders, to eventual winners, Nigeria. But they are still recognised as one of the continent's main powers and under their new Brazilian coach, Ismael Kurtz, have put the disappointments of the past behind them.

Australian fans became big supporters of the Ghana blend of football when the World Youth Cup was staged here in 1993 and Ransford Banini, who starred in that series for Ghana, has also proved a big favourite in the NSL since his transfer to

Melbourne SC from Obuasi Goldfields two seasons ago. In fact the final of the '93 tournament proved a big hit with local fans and although the Ghanaians went down 2-1 to champions Brazil their football was recognised for its style and flair.

"Ghana is a very attack conscious team," says Australian coach Eddie Thomson. "These games won't be played like off-season friendlies, expect them to be very competitive matches but they should also be a great advertisement for attacking football."

In fact, Thomson now has his chance to turn the tables on Ghana and although the two countries have never met at senior level Ghana beat the ***Coca-Cola*** Olyroos 3-1 in the group game at the Barcelona Olympics before beating them again, this time 1-0, in the play-off for third place.

Survivors of those games in this series include Australia's Ned Zelic, Tony Vidmar, Dominic Longo and Paul Okon while Kwame Ayew, Yaw Preko and Yaw Acheampong all played for Ghana.

With megastars like Anthony Yeboah and the curiously-named Abedi Pele in their line-ups, Ghana might have been expected to have achieved more in the last five years than their solitary runners-up spot in the '92 African Championships. Even more so when you consider the current crop of talent, players like Charles Akonnor, a goal scoring midfielder with Fortuna Koln in the Bundesliga.

Akonnor agrees: "It is time that our generation won something for Ghana," he says. "The last time we won anything was the Nations Cup in 1982. I would love to see us win the Nations Cup again."

With five of his national team-mates also in Germany, including two at Ned Zelic's Borussia Dortmund, Akonnor finds himself in one of the biggest Ghana expatriate groups although he has also found plenty of problems to cope with in the tough league.

"It is difficult scoring goals in Germany," he says, "mainly because a lot of the players are selfish. Everyone thinks of himself before the team and this makes me very angry. This is a problem for the coach to sort out."

Nevertheless, Akonnor, who has been part of the national team set-up for the last three years, has done well enough in Germany to look forward to an extension to his contract.

The ever-increasing amount of Ghanaian players based in Europe presents many problems for the national team, problems that many emerging countries like Ghana and Australia have to face.

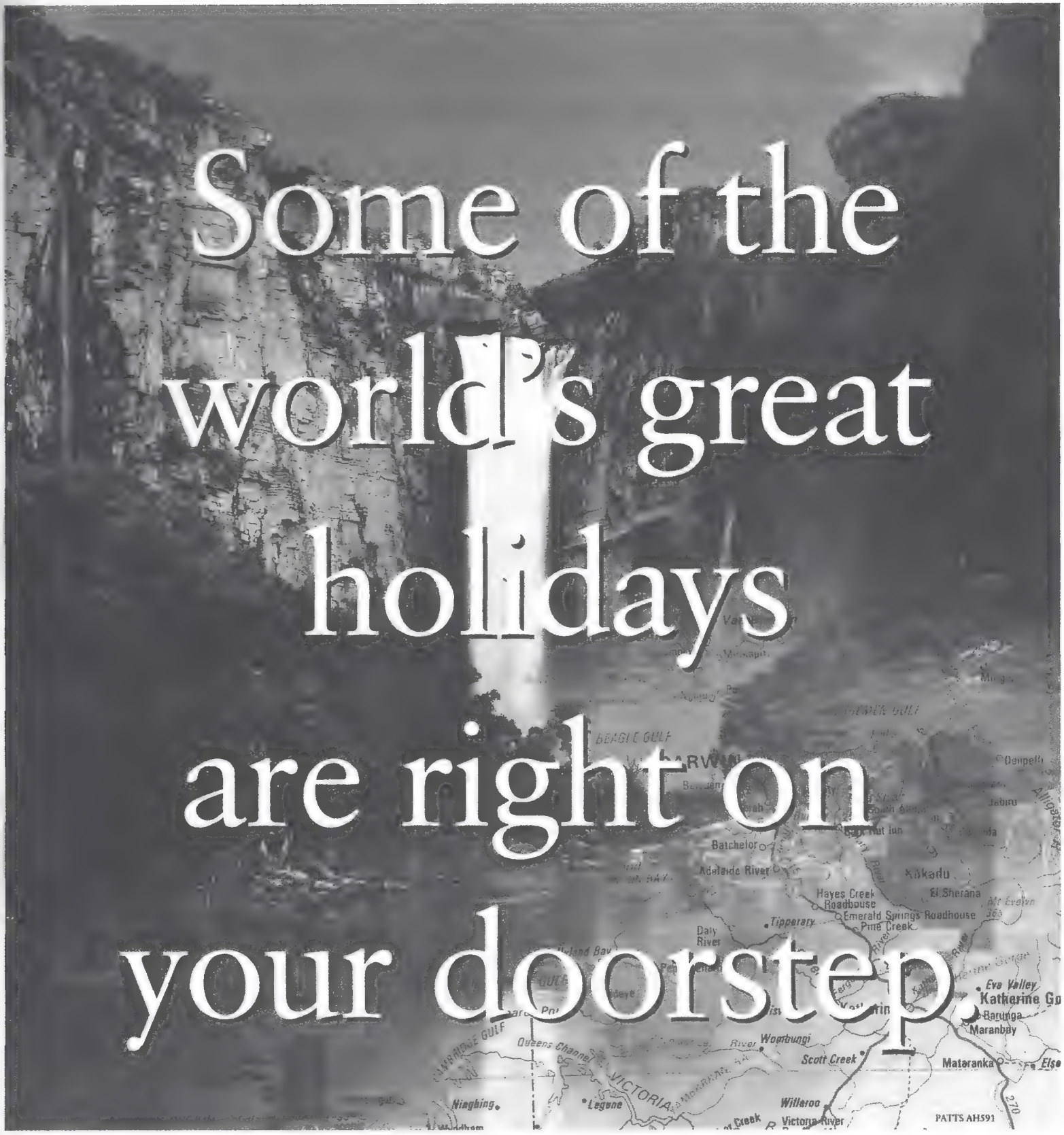
"We are very similar to Australia in many ways," said an official of the Ghana Football Association. "It is difficult sometimes for us to get the results our fans expect because of the problems associated with getting releases from their clubs.

"Football is no longer just a sport and the players must be careful to secure their livelihood. Maybe that is an area which FIFA needs to look at a bit more closely.

"We can learn a lot from this trip to Australia but it also gives us very valuable time with our squad together. That is also important if Ghana is to become the force in football that everyone expects."

Another of the problems that the Black Stars are looking to overcome is the quick change of national team coaches with six at the helm in just over two years. Current boss Ismael Kurtz now has the luxury of the success that that early qualification for the Nations Cup finals has brought but has plenty of problems to overcome.

However, one of those problems isn't a lack of talent at his disposal. The brilliant form of his strikers poses a series of questions and selection conundrums for the Brazilian and if Kurtz decides to play with his best available hit men in this series then he could well be passing some of his problems on to the Aussies.



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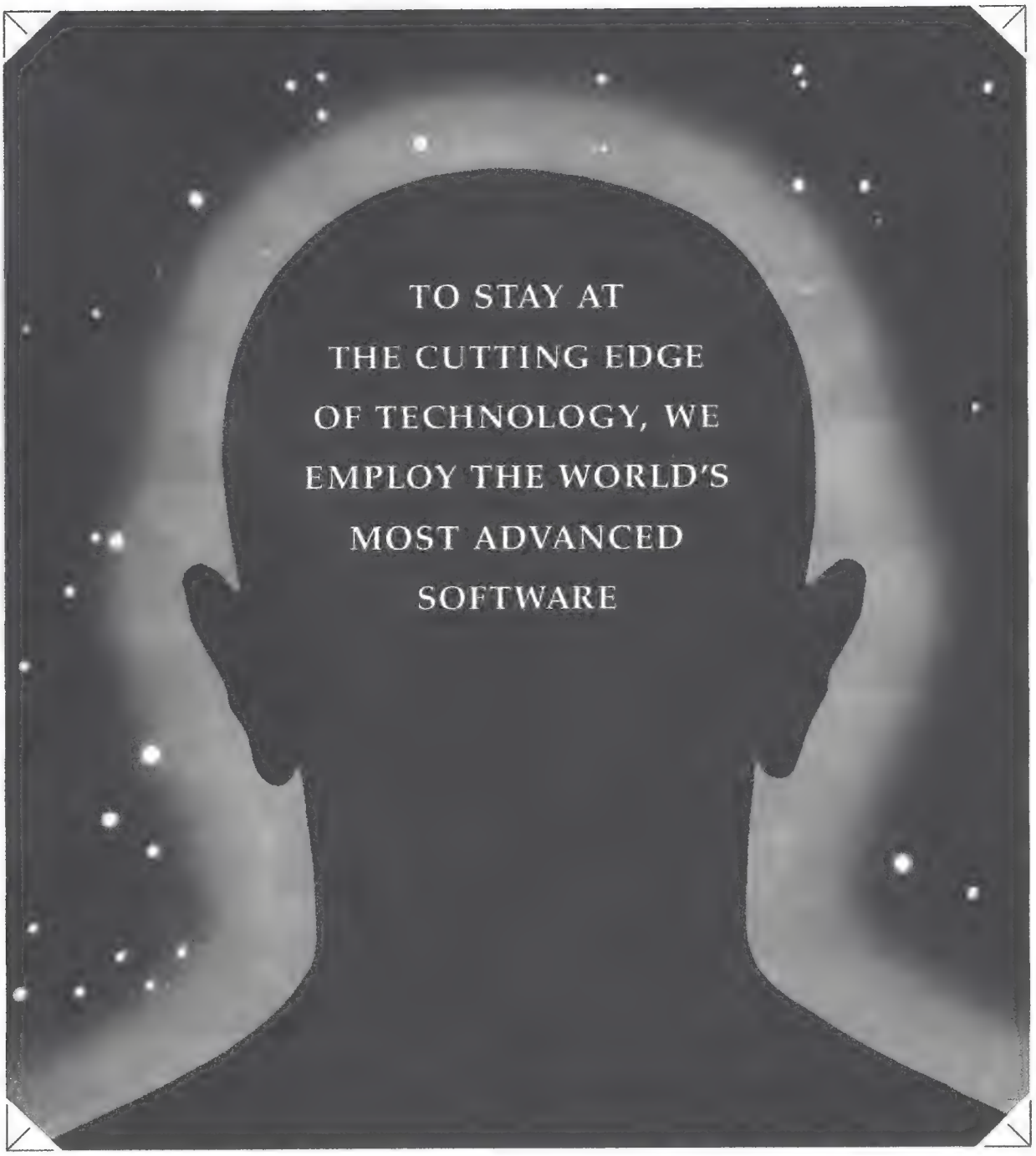

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"BLACK STARS" FACTFILE

The Country:

Land Area — 238,537 square km
Population — 16 million
Capital City — Accra

The Football:

Association: Ghana Football Association, PO Box 1272, Accra, Ghana
GFA Chairman: Joshua Alabi
Formed: 1957
Number of Clubs: 347
Registered Number of Players: 11,275
National Team Colours: Yellow shirts, shorts and socks. White shirts, shorts and socks (alternate)
Domestic League Structure: Premier League of 12 clubs. This will be increased to 14 next season.
Current Champions: Goldfields (this was their second successive title)
Current Cup Winners: Goldfields (beat Cape Coast 4-3 in a penalty shoot out decider)

International Honours:

African Nations Cup — winners: 1963, 65, 78, 82
African Nations Cup — runners-up: 1968, 70, 92

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TEST SERIES REGULATIONS

POINTS

The series shall consist of three matches. In each match three points shall be awarded for a win and no points for a loss.

DRAWN GAMES

If, at the conclusion of normal time in EACH match, the game is drawn, the winner of each game will be decided by the taking of penalty kicks in accordance with the Laws of the Game.

EQUAL POINTS

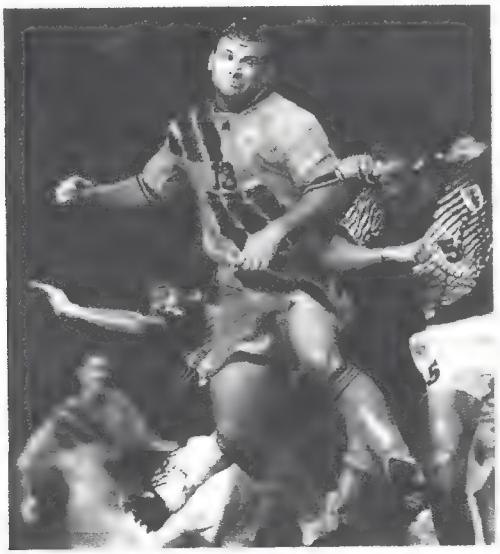
If, at the conclusion of normal time in the third and final match of the series, the two teams are on equal points, the winner of the series will be determined by the taking of penalty kicks in accordance with the Laws of the Game.

SUBSTITUTIONS

In each match the teams shall have the right to choose any of their registered players as substitutes. Substitutes up to a maximum of four field players and one goalkeeper shall be permitted in each match.

REGISTRATION OF PLAYERS AND COLOURS

Each team shall submit a list of players and their corresponding numbers which shall be permanent for the duration of the series. The ***Coca-Cola*** Socceroos shall play in their "home" team colours for the first and third matches of the series and in their "away" colours for the second match.



Coca-Cola SOCCEROOS v GHANA

HE WANTS TO BE THE KING OF THE 'KEEPERS

by Bruce Campbell

I was in the club house with the Sydney United players the night that English club Norwich City made an offer which United simply couldn't refuse, a shaving away from $1.3million. Zeljko Kalac, the goalie that everyone calls Spider, was literally jumping out of his skin.

It was almost as if he was on drugs — his adrenalin was pumping so fast that he just couldn't calm down. By his own high standards the game that evening against Kenny Murphy's Melbourne SC had been a less than memorable one, maybe he had something else on his mind.

Kalac had pulled off at least two match-winning saves, but he had dropped a high ball into the penalty area — the bread and butter stuff that separates him from other 'keepers. It isn't just the fact that ALL balls into the penalty area are his but rather the way that his 6'7" frame looms out of his goal area to take everything. That evening he had dropped one. He had a *BAD* game.

A few weeks later he played against the Singapore Olympic team in a challenge match in Canberra. In front of about 25 spectators the Singapore attack lofted a high ball into the box to be met with 'What are you doing, he's six foot bleeding seven', from their English coach. As one, the United bench turned around and smiled — NSL clubs have been doing that all season and this guy clocked it straight away.

But it is old hat now that Kalac didn't go to Norwich because of problems obtaining a Visa, the English FA changing their rules almost as often as some clubs change coaches. Now it seems that he has to gain 12 full caps before he can get that coveted piece of paper. However, that hasn't stopped an army of agents trying to fix him up with clubs all over Europe. Maybe it was the interest from a certain top ranked Greek club which had Norwich chairman Robert Chase fly out to Sydney to watch Kalac in person against Japan.

So just what is different about Kalac, the transposed centre forward who wants to go down in soccer history as a legend. "Everyone acknowledges what Mark Bosnich has achieved with Aston Villa," says Kalac. "Our two careers have developed almost side by side since we were kids. Bossa didn't get there because he walked in and said, 'Hey, I'm Mark Bosnich' — he had to work for it. But I don't just want to achieve the same as Mark, I want to go one better." And it is that sort of ambition which is sure to propel him to the very top.

Remember that this is the same Kalac who displaced Bosnich from the Sydney United first team, and is now challenging for that coveted number one shirt with the ***Coca-Cola*** Socceroos.

A couple of seasons ago Sydney United had just been beaten in the pre-season NSL Cup final by Parramatta. I bumped into Kalac in the lift at the Novotel in Brighton-le-Sands. Was he disconsolate? Well, if he was he certainly didn't look it. "I suppose every player has to lose in finals," he said with a grin nearly as wide as he is tall. "That way, you know how to win the Grand Finals." That was certainly a new line especially when you are used to listening to a string of worn out cliches about luck, rub of the green, our time will come, *et al*.

Now, Zeljko Kalac is ready to win those big games, he is ready to stake his claim for the title of "King of Keepers",

a title currently held in such style by his former club team-mate Mark Bosnich. He is number one in the NSL, now he wants to go one further. "There is no reason why I can't be tops in England if I get transferred there," he says. "If I can do it in Australia then I just have to adapt to the game over there. I've already proven myself at international level, so why not?"

Most pundits see the English game as tailor-made for Kalac, the ball down the touch-line and crossed into the box style. He obviously thinks so too, but is quick to point out that the game is played with a different intensity there. "Don't forget that the balls are played a lot harder in England," he reminds you. "Sometimes you can't get out to catch the ball, it is a different game."

As well as his ability to take high balls, Kalac has another advantage — his seemingly amazing run of saving penalties. However, the man who pulled one off against Jean Pierre Papin in a match against France doesn't see it that way. "You can't practise saving penalties," he says. "Maybe if I go the right way then I have a 90% chance of saving them, but that's all." The record books show that Kalac has chosen the right side an awful lot of times. He doesn't study the opposition either, in fact that question brings a bit of a grin to his face. "No, I just throw my body down," he laughs. "But sometimes you can work out the direction by the way the player runs up, otherwise you just try to cover as much of one half of the goal as you can and that's it." And the answer to the question everyone wants to ask him on penalties: "You can't wait until the ball is kicked, if you do then you can't catch it. You just have to go in one direction and push yourself out as hard as you can."

Watching English football on the box is one thing but playing there is another. Training in sub-zero temperatures, playing in night games in January when a ball kicked against your leg can leave a sore spot for days, being known wherever you go, whatever you do — or don't do. These are problems that every "foreigner" has to learn to live with in European football, something which is alien to a lad who can jump in his car and drive to beaches like Bondi for sand, surf and girls whenever he wants. "Sure, it's a different lifestyle," says Spider, "but I'm sure when I finally get over there that I can learn to adapt. I'm certainly looking forward to the money!"

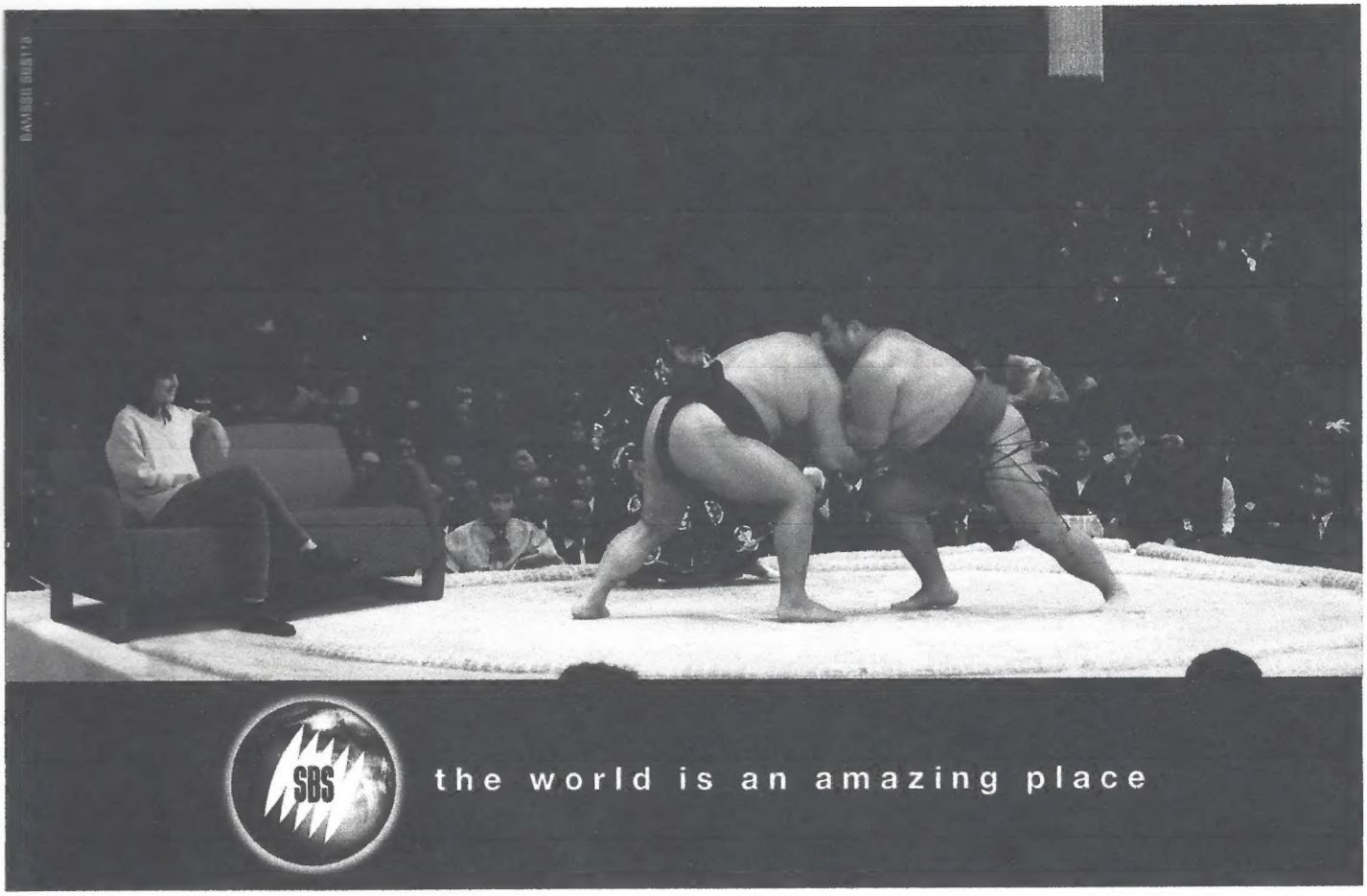
Kalac's determination to play in Europe hasn't made him a soft target either, so agents reading this article, beware. "I won't go to any bodgy club just to get to Europe," he warns. "I want to go to a club which will look after me, one which has a good name and reputation. I don't see Belgium as being any better than the Australian league, so I don't have any intention of going there, either. But other than that I don't really care, I just want to play full-time football."

The pretender to the title of "King of the Keepers" is just as mystified about Australia's seemingly endless supply of class 'keepers as anyone else, although he suggests that we might have a lot of very good goalkeeping coaches. Other than that he points to his father and Ron Corry, who helped with his early development, and current United 'keepers' coach Steve Watson as those who have helped him most. "Ron Corry taught me everything I know," he says, "and now Steve Watson is the main man behind me. Ron Corry was a freak, a goalkeeping coach extraordinaire — just ask anyone who has worked with him, they'll tell you. The man was something else. Ron taught me everything I had to know. But once you get to a certain age, and I am that now, I don't think you can learn any more on the technical side. From then on it is just getting more experience and playing consistently. I think it is crazy that Ronnie isn't involved in the game anymore, he was the mastermind behind Mark Bosnich as well — but that's up to the clubs."

Zeljko Kalac has also pointed the finger at former United players Graham Arnold and Robbie Slater as the ones who gave him his "Spider" nickname. "They were at the club when I was a young player," he says. "Maybe it was because I covered the goal so well but the name has stuck with me."

Amazingly, Zeljko Kalac has had to withstand the challenge of two Australian internationals to maintain his hold on the number one shirt at Sydney United. Both Mark Bosnich and Tony Franken were signed at a time when he was the regular 'keeper, but both left the club after being unable to break into the side on a regular basis while Kalac has only gone from strength to strength. Maybe it is as much his determination to play football at the highest level as his uncanny height, or maybe it is his ability to cover the ground shots as much as the high ones. "If you don't want to do it you won't," is his simple answer to a question which isn't quite so simple but whatever the real reason for his fantastic ability Zeljko Kalac is sure to break a lot of opposition hearts wherever he plays next season. There will also be a lot of hearts broken in west Sydney as Zeljko Kalac has built up a growing support amongst young United fans — a lot of them girls. "I love being with the kids," he says. "I don't know how old a lot of these girls are but it is good for the game that there is a growing interest from the youngsters."

And a final word from the man who wants to be "King of the 'Keepers" on who will get his "little black book" when he moves overseas: "There is nothing in it, mate — believe me!" And with that Spider Kalac doubles up in laughter, although when it comes time to pull on the gloves he is deadly serious.



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This is a **PLAYBILL** publication.

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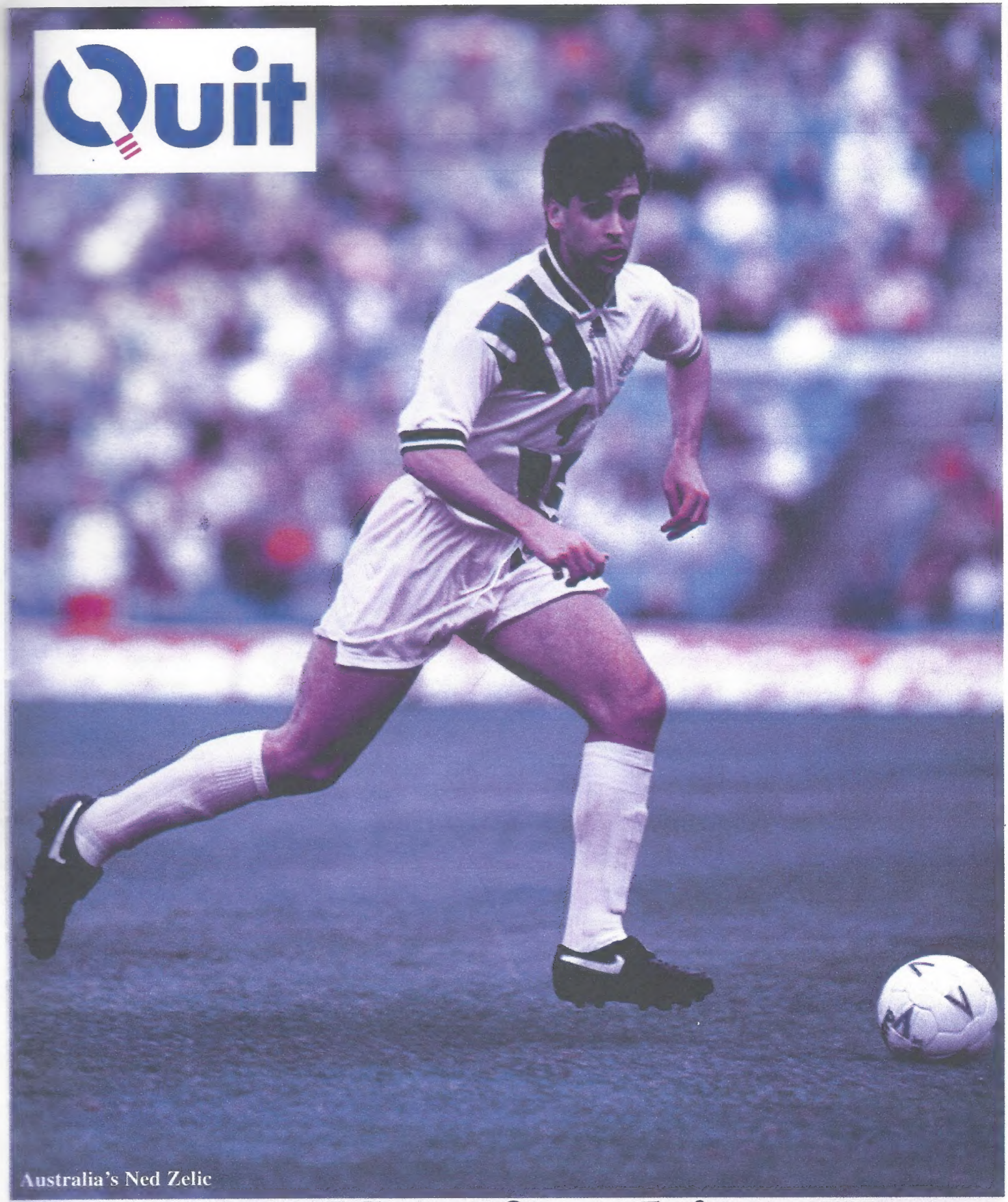

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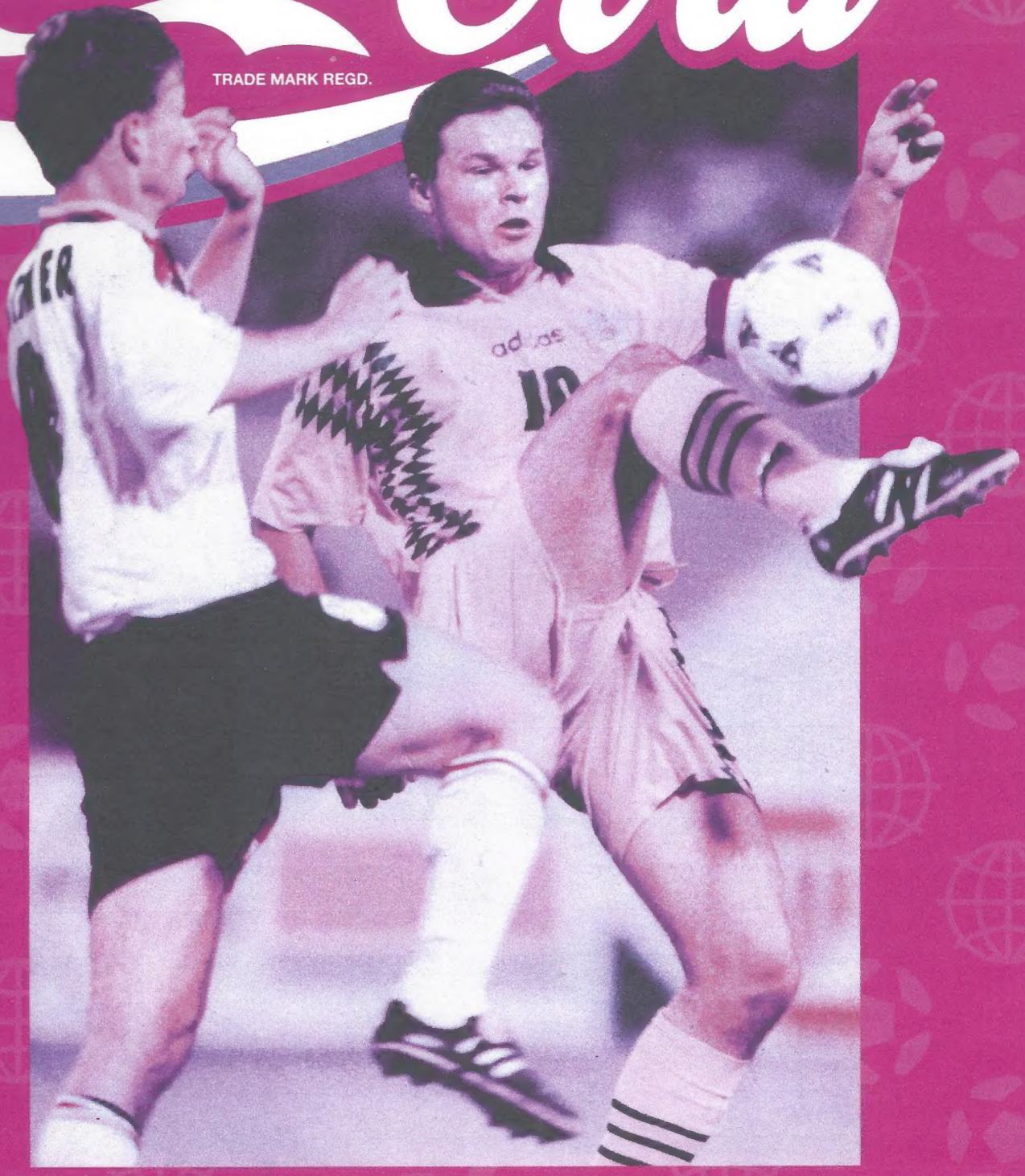

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